

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANILA
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 228979

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: KUALA LUMPUR MEETING ON INDOCHINESE REFUGEES

REF: STATE 215855, STATE 221451, BANGKOK 25291
(NOTAL), BANGKOK 25414 (NOTAL), PARIS 29493, GENEVA
13242 (NOTAL)

1. ALTHOUGH KUALA LUMPUR MEETING LIKELY TO BE MAINLY INFORMATIONAL AND LOW KEY, WITH UNHCR AND MOST OTHER PARTICIPANTS NOT BENT ON ACHIEVING ANY MAJOR RESULT, THE MEETING NEVERTHELESS PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE BOTH PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SUBSTANTIVE OBJECTIVES OF OUR INDOCHINESE REFUGEE PROGRAM. WE HOPE, THROUGH THE MEETING, TO ACHIEVE FORWARD MOVEMENT ON INCREASING INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN RESETTLEMENT AND IN SUPPORT FOR THE UNHCR, TO INCREASE UNHCR RESPONSIVENESS TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE INDOCHINESE REFUGEE SITUATION, AND TO ENCOURAGE COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE RELIABLE HAVEN FOR REFUGEES. THIS MEETING AND WHATEVER LATER ACTIVITIES THAT MAY BE ARRANGED SHOULD ALSO DEMONSTRATE TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC AND CONGRESS (A) THAT THE INTEREST AND COMMITMENT OF THOSE NATIONS INVOLVED IN THE PROBLEM REMAINS HIGH AND (B) THAT WE ARE DOING OUR BEST TO ACHIEVE

THE GREATEST POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN THE HANDLING OF THE REFUGEE PROBLEM.

2. HCR HARTLING AND HIS ADVISORS ARE CLEARLY NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE KUALA LUMPUR MEETING OR ABOUT AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, EVEN A SMALL, LOW-VISIBILITY ONE. HOWEVER, THEY NEED TO PLAY A MORE APPROPRIATE LEADERSHIP ROLE IN FOCUSING INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS ON CONFIDENTIAL

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THE INDOCHINESE REFUGEE PROBLEM. HARTLING IS WILLING TO CONSIDER A CONFERENCE, WITH SUFFICIENT PREPARATION, LATE IN THE YEAR. WE AGREE THAT THIS WOULD BE AN ACCEPTABLE TIME-FRAME SINCE IT COULD BE PRECEDED BY CAREFUL PREPARATION, INCLUDING DISCUSSIONS AT THE EXCOMM MEETING IN OCTOBER. OTHER QUESTIONS OF UNHCR RESPONSIVENESS TO THE NEEDS OF THE SITUATION, PARTICULARLY THOSE INVOLVING WORKING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FIELD, CAN BE SAVED FOR THE LATER SESSION AT KUALA LUMPUR.

3. AT THE KUALA LUMPUR MEETING, TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE, THE ASEAN COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY THAILAND AND MALAYSIA, SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO CARRY THE BALL. WE CAN ALSO HOPE FOR COORDINATION FROM THE AUSTRALIANS AND POSSIBLY THE FRENCH. WE CAN EXPECT THE UK REPRESENTATIVE -- AND THE HONG KONG REPRESENTATIVE, IF THERE IS ONE -- AMONG OTHERS, TO MAKE THEIR SPECIAL POINTS. THE COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO IMPRESS ON HARTLING THE POINTS THEY HAVE MADE SO OFTEN TO US REGARDING THE STRAIN IMPOSED ON THEM BY LONG-TERM, INDIGESTIBLE REFUGEE POPULATIONS. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE ASEAN COUNTRIES SHOULD TAKE THE STEP OF OFFERING

TO SUPPORT WITH BILATERAL APPROACHES OR AT THE ASEAN-EEC TALKS ANY INITIATIVE THAT THE UNHCR AGREES TO TAKE TO HELP THE REFUGEE PROBLEM. WE BELIEVE THAT, IN CONSULTATIONS WITH THE AUSTRALIANS, AND OTHER MISSIONS THAT POSTS MAY DEEM APPROPRIATE, EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE BEFORE THE KUALA LUMPUR MEETING TO ENCOURAGE THE ASEAN GOVERNMENTS TO PROPOSE SUCH COOPERATION WHEN THEY PRESENT THEIR CASES.

4. BANGKOK REFTELS HAVE PROPOSED HIGHLY COGENT AND USEFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE KUALA LUMPUR MEETING. WE VERY MUCH APPRECIATE THE POINTS WHICH AMBASSADOR ABRAMOWITZ MADE WITH HARTLING AND HOPE THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS WILL DO LIKEWISE.
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5. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN ENCOURAGED BY THE CLARITY OF THE FRENCH THINKING AS REPORTED IN PARIS REFTEL. WE BELIEVE THAT THE PROMISED "MINIMUM SET OF RULES" COULD

BE A USEFUL IDEA AND WOULD HELP CONCENTRATE SOME OF THE THINKING USUALLY EXPRESSED IN OPERATIONAL TERMS. AS A PART OF THE AGENDA FOR A FOLLOW-ON CONFERENCE, SUCH RULES WOULD PROVIDE SOME OF THE RESULTS THAT WOULD MAKE SUCH A CONFERENCE APPEAR PRODUCTIVE. CHRISTOPHER

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